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## How Much Freedom?

NEW YORK, April 24—The current furor over our abortive adventure in Cuba stems from the basic dilemma we face—how much freedom can we afford to give up and how much can we afford to keep in the struggle with Communism.

The first temptation is to say that the press failed to do its job in reporting the preparations for the invasion of Cuba, which was financed and directed by our own Central Intelligence Agency. Obviously the story could have been reported as the plan developed.

The fact is that the American people first learned that their government had been directly involved from Premier Khrushchev, a report fully confirmed the following day by President Kennedy and the National Security Council.

But, just as obviously, the press owes something to its government when preparations of great moment are being made, and when the life of the nation is in jeopardy.

During World War II a voluntary censorship operated with great success. The Office of War Information acted as an advisory agency. There was no government censorship as such, but the effect was the same as though there had been.

Today, though no declaration of war has been issued by either side, we are in as great danger, or perhaps greater, than at any time during World War II. The question is, how great is the press's obligation to report the news fully to the public; how great is its obligation to protect a critical operation embarked on by the government, where secrecy is vital; and how to relate the two.

The nature and importance of these questions are fully recognized in

Washington. They always have been. In time of declared war, when our destruction was openly sought by force of arms, the basic question was easily resolved. If the danger was great, though the danger may be great, there has been no formal question as such, and the dilemma resolved—how much freedom can we afford to keep, how much can we afford to give up.

The fundamental nature of this dilemma makes all the more important the manner in which we go about solving it, because it relates to the whole struggle with communism.

Our political philosophy has as its first and foremost concept the premise that men desire above all else freedom. This idea runs through our great charters of government, the Declaration of Independence and the American Constitution.

Yet the Communists are betting about ten to one, or odds even greater, that men do not desire freedom above all else. The Communists have committed their entire plan for world domination to the idea that men will trade part of their freedom for economic security.

Not all men, necessarily. Men who have known freedom, as we have, will rebel. But people who have known neither freedom nor economic security will, the Communists think, choose economic security first and take their chances with freedom, rather than the reverse.

The example of Cuba, where the Cubans appear to prefer Castro, a dictator who holds the power of life and death by decree to whatever we can offer them, would indicate that, whatever else we have done, we have failed to demonstrate the virtues of freedom even to an island within sight of our shore.—W.H.E.